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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR WHA/CAR (BENT) AND G/IWI (KHADIAGALA)
SOUTHCOM FOR POLAD AND J7 (RHANNAN)

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: CHILD MARRIAGE: JAMAICA

REF: STATE 36341

[1](#)1. Per reftel instructions, this cable addresses the issue of child marriage in Jamaica.

[1](#)2. A. What is the legal age of marriage in your country? Is it the same for girls and boys? Is there a lower legal age for marriage with parental consent?

[1](#)3. A. The legal age of marriage, with or without parental consent, is 16 years. The law, set forth in the Marriage Act of 1897, is the same for both boys and girls.

[1](#)4. B. To what extent is underage marriage a significant problem, either among the population at large or within on or more minority groups? To what extent does underage marriage have adverse affects on the well being of the child?

[1](#)5. B. Underage marriage is not a significant problem in Jamaica. A University of California Berkeley study found the median age of first marriage in Jamaica to be 31 for both men and women. The study found that less than one percent of the population between ages 15 and 19 is married.

[1](#)6. C. Are there currently any U.S.-funded initiatives in your host country that aim to reduce the incidence or address the negative affects of child marriage?

[1](#)7. C. There are no U.S.-funded initiatives that address the issue.

ROBINSON